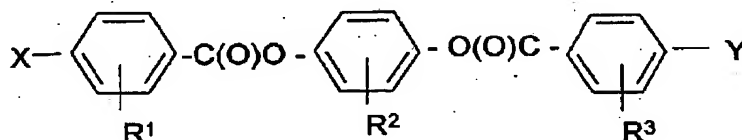


Amendments to the Specification:

Please delete the paragraph appearing under "Abstract of the Invention" at p. 59 of the specification, and insert the following amended paragraph:

A method for producing a blend comprising randomly substituted mesogens comprising: providing one or more platform molecules have the following general structure:



wherein at least one member selected from the group consisting of X and Y comprises one or more spacer groups; R² is a bulky organic group whereby, when both X and Y are reacted with polymerizable groups to produce polymerizable mesogens, R² provides sufficient steric hindrance to achieve a nematic state at room temperature while suppressing crystallinity of the polymerizable mesogens at room temperature; and, R¹ and R³ are selected from groups less bulky than R²; and independently substituting at least one member selected from the group consisting of X and Y with a polymerizable group, thereby producing a blend of randomly substituted mesogens.